

## Governance of State Universities and Colleges in Region XII, Philippines

Lucrecia E. Tuyo

*College of Teacher Education, Cotabato State University*

---

**ABSTRACT :** Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are run and operated by the two slightly overlapping processes: governance and management. It is governance that enables or empowers management and it is management that ensures that quality education is attained. The study utilized the combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods to determine the extent of governance of State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) in Region XII, Philippines employing the descriptive survey design to the 144 respondents covering the administrators and department heads using complete enumeration sampling technique. Findings revealed that there was an effective governance of SUCs in terms of policy execution, direction setting, and management control which indicate the SUCs need to maintain their best practices and intensify more their four-fold functions such as instruction, research, extension, and production in order to achieve their vision, mission, goals and objectives more efficiently and effectively.

**KEYWORDS:** Direction Setting, Governance, Management Control, Policy Execution, State Universities and Colleges

---

### I. INTRODUCTION

Thomas Jefferson once said, “The care of human life and happiness not their destruction, is the first and only object of the government.” Indeed, governance refers to how decision making happens in educational systems. It refers to the institutions and dynamics through which education systems allocate roles and responsibilities, determine priorities and designs, and carry out education policies and programs (Burns and Koster, 2016). Governance focuses on the administrators’ effective exercise of authority in the implementation of policies, programs, projects, and activities that includes strategic direction setting, policy execution and management control. Nevertheless, there are only few works of literature and studies about governance in higher education institutions available as a result, the management functions particularly on decision making has not been taken into full consideration. Republic Act 7722, otherwise known as Commission on Higher Education Act, mandates institutions of higher learning like State Universities and Colleges (SUCs) to respond to the call for societal transformation. The aim is to serve the poorest of the poor, the less privileged, the deprived and the oppressed. The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) oversees the higher education system. It is an agency attached to the Office of the President of the Philippines for administrative purposes. CHED is responsible for administering and supervising both public and private higher education institutions in the Philippines with three major functions of governance: strategic direction setting, broader policy formulation and management control. All SUCs follow the same governance and management structures.

Republic Act 8292, otherwise known as the Higher Education Modernization Act of 1997, provides among others, for the uniform composition and powers of the governing boards of SUCs with the Chairman of CHED as the Chair of the governing boards of all SUCs (previously chaired by the DECS Secretary). With this new set-up, in effect this places all SUCs under the supervision, policy and development mandate of CHED. This enables the CHED to exert influence or provide proper guidance on the quality and directions of the academic programs as well as on the internal operations of the SUCs. Further, State Universities and Colleges are a fundamental part of a society’s sustainable development. SUCs under the Commission on Higher Education of the Philippines are envisioned as major stakeholders in providing professional and technical training alongside its fourfold function: instruction, research, extension and production. Effective leadership requires individuals to contribute to the strategy and aspirations of the organization and act in a manner consistent with its values. To do so, they must demonstrate effectiveness in identifying the contexts for change, applying knowledge and evidence, making decisions and valuating impact. Moreover, policy execution is an essential activity that every SUC should take into careful consideration. Policy Execution refers to actual and effective implementation of approved policies in the operation of college programs, projects, and activities. According to Reference for

Business Encyclopedia (2022) when a policy is executed, input values are evaluated against the logic in the policy model. The input values for each execution are supplied by a specific policy instance. One can configure a policy to be executed automatically or according to a predefined schedule (or both). Whereas, direction setting refers to action of effective leading and guiding the administrative tasks and processes, and supervision of programs and projects, and activities. In setting direction, school leaders work to build relationships and develop people in a number of ways including: working with stakeholders to identify specific school and system literacy goal(s); ensuring literacy goals are clearly communicated; encouraging staff to evaluate their progress as they work toward the literacy goal(s); and referring frequently to literacy goals when making decisions about programs and directions. Joel Barker, a futurist said, “A plan for communicating your direction to key stakeholders, Knowing where an organization wants to go, and having a road map to get there, is a must-have to be successful. “In preparing for battle, I have always found that plans are useless, but planning is indispensable.” (General Dwight D. Eisenhower) “Vision without action is just a dream. Action without vision just passes the time. But vision, combined with action, can change the world.”

Management control systems are tools to aid management for steering an organization toward its strategic objectives and competitive advantage. Management controls are only one of the tools which managers use in implementing desired strategies. However strategies get implemented through management controls, organizational structure, human resources management and culture (Anthony and Govindarajan, 2007). According to Maciariello et al. (1994), management control is concerned with coordination, resource allocation, motivation, and performance measurement. The practice of management control and the design of management control systems draws upon a number of academic disciplines. Management control involves extensive measurement and it is therefore related to and requires contributions from accounting especially management accounting. Second, it involves resource allocation decisions and is therefore related to and requires contribution from economics especially managerial economics. Third, it involves communication, and motivation which means it is related to and must draw contributions from social psychology especially organizational behavior.

Therefore, SUCs have to move ideas along the road to action, to develop knowledge needed and to apply useful knowledge in the solution of society’s major problems. This study aimed to explore the governance among the SUCs in Region XII in relation to the fourfold functions namely: instruction, research, extension and production. This specifically determined the scope of governance of the SUCs comprising the locale in terms of policy execution which is the actual and effective implementation of approved policies in the operation of institutional programs, projects, and activities; direction setting which is the action of effective leading and guiding the administrative tasks and processes, and supervision of programs and projects, and activities; and management control of state colleges and universities.

## **II. METHODOLOGY**

This study utilized the combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods in which the descriptive research design was used to determine the extent of the governance of SUCs in terms of direction settings, policy execution and management control. Further this research employed the total enumeration sampling technique since all the four SUCs of Region IX schools have been explored. These SUCs included the Cotabato City State Polytechnic College now named as Cotabato State University with 39 respondents, Sultan Kudarat State University (SKSU) with 37 respondents, University of Southern Mindanao (USM) with 36 respondents, and Cotabato Foundation College of Science and Technology (CFCST) with 32 respondents. A total of 144 respondents out of 160 had been included, however, some of the said respondents went on leave and some were sent for seminar during the conduct of the survey. A self-made survey questionnaire was used in this study for data gathering for the administrators and department heads that were holding key positions. Personal interview or the key informant interview guide was conducted to serve as secondary data in order to validate the information supplied by the respondents in the survey questionnaire. Moreover, the instrument was validated by the members of the tribunal panel, and it was subjected to validity and reliability tests. Mean was used to describe the experiences and practices of governance in the four SUCs in Region XII.

## **III. RESULTS**

Table 1 presents the mean values on the extent of effective governance of State Universities and Colleges in Region XII in terms of policy execution with a general weighted mean of 3.11 described as effective. Two items received the highest rating such as the approved policies are enforced strictly without exceptions and faculty attendance to seminars, trainings are widely and fairly distributed (not monopolized by a favored few)

with a mean value of 3.20 interpreted as effective. The lowest weighted item was on the SUC conforming to the government laws and CHED policies implementation of its various academic programs with a mean value of 2.99 also described as effective.

Table 1  
Mean Values on the Extent of the Governance of State Universities  
and Colleges in Region XII in terms of Policy Execution  
n=144

Item	Mean	Interpretation
1. The SUCs strategic plan is well carried out.	3.01	Effective
2. Our SUC conforms to the government laws and CHED policies implementation of its various academic programs	2.99	Effective
3. The administration implements only the policies approved by the BOR/ BOT.	3.13	Effective
4. Approved policies are enforced strictly without exceptions.	3.20	Effective
5. Faculty attendance to seminars, trainings are widely and fairly distributed (not monopolized by a favored few).	3.20	Effective
6. Every faculty and employee toes the line in the implementation of its policies.	3.13	Effective
7. The registration office is publicly known for its integrity and honesty in recording and keeping of academic records.	3.16	Effective
8. Every classroom and its fixtures are well-kept and maintained for cleanliness and orderliness.	3.02	Effective
9. There is discipline and honesty in the utilization of office equipment and materials.	3.15	Effective
10. The selection in the designation of middle administrators is Democratic based on merit and fitness.	3.14	Effective
Overall Mean	3.11	Effective

Legend:

Range of Means	Description and Interpretation
3.50 – 4.00	Very Effective (when the condition described is at all times observed)
2.50 – 3.49	Effective (when the condition described is most of the time observed)
1.50 – 2.49	Less Effective (when the condition described is seldom observed)
1.00 – 1.49	Not Effective (when the condition described is never undertaken)

Table 2 presents the mean values on the extent of the governance of State Universities and Colleges in Region XII in terms of Direction Setting with a general weighted mean value of 3.14 described as effective. The highest rated item was on the institution allocates trust funds for student services and activities with a mean value of 3.28 described as effective whereas the lowest rated item was on the professional development activities of faculty are in accordance with the teaching goals of the university/college as shown from its mean value of 2.93 interpreted as effective.

Moreover, based on the interview with the teacher respondents, it revealed that the skills of the administrators in direction setting have been effective as evidenced by their capabilities in governing their respective institutions. Also, they unanimously agreed that their head of institutions have been using varied schemes in setting the direction of their state colleges and universities in terms of the four fold functions such instruction, research, extension as well as production. Some of the respondents narrated that their institutions have employed strong linkages to intensify the effectiveness of institutional governance on the part of the

administrators. Also, the respondents emphasized that they have a planning section manned by their planning officer to oversee the strategic plans and directions of their institutions. Others pointed out that they have a system of monitoring the implementation of their school development plans and relevant mechanisms in the achievement of their goals and agenda.

Table 2  
Mean Values on the Extent of Governance of State Universities and Colleges  
in terms of Direction Setting  
n=144

Item	Mean	Interpretation
1. The institution has a planning unit which is responsible in the planning, monitoring and evaluation of planned activities/targets.	3.14	Effective
2. Comprehensively and simultaneously assesses policy outcomes in terms of objectives, higher goals and externalities.	3.11	Effective
3. The development plan is congruent with the mission of the institution as well as the national, regional and local development goals and agenda.	3.20	Effective
4. The development plan is available in printed and electronic forms.	3.10	Effective
5. The planning process is a cooperative and participative endeavor of administration, the faculty and the students.	3.08	Effective
6. The development plan is reviewed, evaluated and updated regularly.	2.93	Effective
7. The professional development activities of faculty are in accordance with the teaching goals of the university/college.	3.11	Effective
8. There is a system to monitor the implementation of the development plan.	3.19	Effective
9. The institution provides/allocates trust funds for student services and activities.	3.28	Effective
10. There is a system/mechanism in the cleanliness and orderliness of the school.	3.23	Effective
Overall Mean	3.14	Effective

Legend:

Range of Means	Description and Interpretation
3.50 – 4.00	Very Effective (when the condition described is at all times observed)
2.50 – 3.49	Effective (when the condition described is most of the time observed)
1.50 – 2.49	Less Effective (when the condition described is seldom observed)
1.00 – 1.49	Not Effective (when the condition described is never undertaken)

Table 3 presents the mean values on the extent of the governance of State Universities and Colleges in terms of Management Control with a general weighted mean of 24 described as effective. The highest rating was obtained by the statement on ensuring a safety and convenience by situating adequate proper entrance and exits with a mean value of 3.27 described as effective while the lowest rated item was on the monitoring and evaluating linkages, partnerships and networking activities with a mean of 3.14 also interpreted as effective.

In addition, the respondents revealed during the interview that the management control employed by their administrators have been effective in the sense that the human resource management office have been observing transparency in ensuring access to accurate information about promotion in ranks of the faculty and employees. Also, they agreed that there has been an effective performance evaluation of their faculty including their staff which have been implemented with honesty and credibility.

The rest of the respondents agreed that there has been an effective management and administration of their financial resources. Also, the result of the interview with the respondent indicated that the administrators have been encouraging their faculty to use students' performance results to develop their school's educational goals; while others said they have been implementing and monitoring their plans, programs and other related services.

Table 3  
Mean Values on the Extent of Governance of State Universities and Colleges  
in terms of Management Control  
n=144

Item	Mean	Interpretation
1. The human resource management office observes transparency in ensuring access to accurate information about promotion in ranks of the faculty and employees.	3.21	Effective
2. Performance evaluation of its faculty and staff are honest and credible.	3.21	Effective
3. Its management of financial resources is well administered.	3.28	Effective
4. Ensures safety and convenience by situating adequate proper entrance and exits.	3.37	Effective
5. Implements and monitors plans, programs and other related services.	3.15	Effective
6. Monitors and evaluates linkages, partnerships and networking Activities.	3.14	Effective
7. Ensures that the staff/faculty workload is in accordance with the college educational policies.	3.17	Effective
8. Uses students' performance results to develop the school's educational goals.	3.21	Effective
9. The institution has a system of maintaining the confidentiality and security of official records.	3.33	Effective
10. The Institution provides students center for students' activities.	3.34	Effective
Overall Mean	3.24	Effective

Legend:

Range of Means	Description and Interpretation
3.50 – 4.00	Very Effective (when the condition described is at all times observed)
2.50 – 3.49	Effective (when the condition described is most of the time observed)
1.50 – 2.49	Less Effective (when the condition described is seldom observed)
1.00 – 1.49	Not Effective (when the condition described is never undertaken)

IV. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

**Governance of State Universities and Colleges in terms of Policy Execution:** Policy execution is vital in every organization since it focuses on the actual and effective implementation of approved policies in the operation of the institutional programs, projects, and activities. This study found that in terms of governance among the state universities and colleges as far as policy execution is concerned has indicated that the approved policies are enforced strictly without exceptions and faculty attendance to seminars, trainings are widely and fairly distributed (not monopolized by a favored few) were effective as shown from its mean value of 3.20. This implies that the policies of SUCs are properly followed through the coordinated and collaborative efforts of the stakeholders concerned. During the ocular, it was observed that discipline has been manifested in

the school offices in utilizing equipment's and materials and a proper selection of designation of administrators. Further, during visitation and observation, it was found out that the policies had been strictly enforced within the SUCs vicinity, attendance of faculty to seminars and trainings is widely, and fairly distributed. In addition, this finding is supported by Hayes (2014) who explained that policy formulation is the development of effective and acceptable courses of action for addressing what has been placed on the policy agenda. Effective formulation means that the policy proposed is regarded as a valid, efficient, and implementable solution to the issue at hand. On the other hand, the lowest weighted item was on the SUC conforming to the government laws and CHED policies implementation of its various academic programs as revealed by its mean value of 2.99 also described as effective. This finding implies that the SUCs are in adherence to the policies from the Commission on Higher Education in order to align their program offerings and other relevant programs that would cater to the needs and demands of the students and the industry. During the interview, the respondents said that all their curricular offerings conform to the CHED policies, and other policies had been approved by the governing board. Based on the result of the focus group discussion with the faculty and designated administrators, they stressed that SUCs registrar offices are known for their honesty in recording and keeping academic records. Generally, SUCs conforms to the government laws and CHED policies in the implementation of its various academic programs, it implies that SUCs have effective implementation of their policies; nonetheless, there is a need to strengthen the execution schemes through research and other innovative programs. Overall, the extent of effective governance of State Universities and Colleges in Region XII in terms of policy execution was effective as proven from its general weighted mean of 3.11. This implies that SUCs governance on the formulation of their policies are based on legal bases. Strehlenert (2015) emphasized that evidence has come to play a central role in health policymaking. However, policymakers tend to use other types of information besides research evidence. Most prior studies on evidence-informed policy have focused on the policy formulation phase without a systematic analysis of its implementation. It has been suggested that in order to fully understand the policy process, the analysis should include both policy formulation and implementation.

**Governance of State Universities and Colleges in terms of Direction Setting:** Direction setting is one of the variables in determining the extent of governance among SUCs. In this study, the respondents gave the highest rating to the item showing that the institution allocates trust funds for student services and activities with a mean value of 3.28 described as effective. This implies there is a high regard for the students' welfare and affairs. This means the process of setting direction for human resources has been effectively observed by the SUCs from top to bottom. Controller and Auditor General (2022) emphasized that the Boards have a central role in setting their organization's strategic direction. Strategic direction-setting includes setting realistic medium and short-term outcomes, priorities, and expenditure/investment choices and budgets. Input into strategic thinking and planning to prepare a coherent strategy is of fundamental importance to effective governance.

On the other hand, the lowest rated item was on the professional development activities of faculty are in accordance with the teaching goals of the university/college as shown from its mean value of 2.93 interpreted as effective. This means the faculty development programs of SUCs are in accordance with their respective goals and objectives in such a way that everything is set into unified directions. During visitation, each school has planning unit wherein accordingly, the unit is in charge in preparing the strategic plan of the institution with the help of the deans, chairman and head of each unit in the institution. Wherein one student was asked, he said that they were paying athletics fee, library fee and medical fee. According to the respondents, all their activities are anchored on the vision, mission and objectives of the institutions. Creating a solid strategy that outlines company's direction can help increase its efficiency, lower stress and help improve its profitability. Knowing the various types of strategic direction can help in the creation of a more comprehensive strategic direction overall (Indeed Editorial Team, 2021).

Generally, the extent of the governance of State Universities and Colleges in Region XII in terms of Direction Setting was effective as manifested from its weighted mean value of 3.13. This implies that the SUCs have provided importance on setting the direction of their institutions. As observed and noted during the focus group discussion, all minutes of meeting and procedures in planning session are filed in the planning office as well as every college has its own copy. Finally, when documents that were analyzed, the researcher found out that the institutions allocates funds for student services. Further, during the ocular visit it was found out that the institution maintains the cleanliness and orderliness of its classroom, comfort facilities, and campus. The

findings corroborates with the statements of interviewed faculty and administrators that the system on monitoring the implementation of all plans and activities are stipulated in the school code or manual. Generally it implies that there is effective governance in direction setting in the Region. Brearly (2020) explained that setting direction is an important step for leaders to take, at any level. It is a critical action. Being able to set a direction does wonderful things. If your team is showing poor performance or experiencing conflict, setting a clear direction can be a good way to get things back on track. Setting direction helps leaders hold people accountable, clarifies priorities and reduces busy work as well as it helps motivate people and can improve performance. In connection to this, Haramain (2018) said, "It could be inferred that the desirable factors had a significant effect in sustaining the excellent performance of teachers; therefore, the person, school, student and community-related factors are very much indispensable in taking into account the leading performance of the teachers who are the front-liners in educating the minds, limbs and hearts of human resources who are the hope in combatting the challenges brought about by the Fourth Industrial Revolution known as Education 4.0." Thus, the governance of state colleges and universities in terms of direction setting could be more effective if the human resources strive to improve their performance since this is one of the factors to achieve effective educational directions leading to quality education.

**Governance of State Universities and Colleges in terms of Management Control:** Management control is described as a function that is aimed at achieving defined goals within a set timetable. The process has three major components, like taking remedial action, measuring the actual performance, and setting standards. Management control includes behavioral consideration, financial and non-financial performance, and management control activities (Bhasin, 2019). In consonance to this, the respondents rated effective on the statement of ensuring a safety and convenience by situating adequate proper entrance and exits with a mean value of 3.27. This means the SUCs have devised management schemes to control the movements of the human resources. The faculty workloads, according to the respondents were based on the existing policies of the CHED and the institutions wherein the vice president for academic affairs ensures that the faculty workloads are based on the educational qualification and specialization of the faculty. Each institution has students center equipped with facilities and equipment. According to the students assigned in the center, the student's governments of their school are the one who are responsible in maintain the cleanliness of the center. During visitation, it was found out that all information was posted in a bulletin of information in strategic places of the institutions. Moreover, the HRMO creates a committee on performance evaluation whose responsibility is to evaluate the papers of the faculty. Each institution's administered the plans carefully and the office is very strict in terms of liquidation and reimbursement.

On the other hand, the respondents rated the lowest on the the monitoring and evaluating linkages, partnerships and networking activities with a mean of 3.14 also interpreted as effective. This means the SUCs have effective monitoring and evaluation schemes; nonetheless there is a need to strengthen these schemes through collaboration and innovations. Overall, the extent of the governance of State Universities and Colleges in terms of Management Control with a general weighted mean of 3.24 described as effective. This finding means that college administrators have demonstrated in practice good management and observed transparency in ensuring access to accurate information especially about promotion in ranks of faculty and employees. All indicators in the table revealed effective result of management control. The faculty workloads, According to the respondents were based on the existing policies of the CHED and the vice president for academic affairs (VPAA) ensures that the faculty workloads are based on the educational qualification and specialization of the faculty. In general, administrators implemented, and administered the plans carefully and effectively in the Region. According to the Reference for Business Encyclopedia (2022), management control describes the means by which the actions of individuals or groups within an organization are constrained to perform certain actions while avoiding other actions in an effort to achieve organizational goals. Management control can be classified as bureaucratic control which pertains to policies and operating procedures like employees handbook; financial control which pertains to key financial targets like the return of invests; and quality control which focuses on acceptance levels of product or process variation.

The faculty workloads, according to the respondents were based on the existing policies of the CHED and the institutions wherein the vice president for academic affairs ensures that the faculty workloads are based on the educational qualification and specialization of the faculty. Each institution has students center equipped with facilities and equipment. According to the students assigned in the center, the student's governments of their school are the one who are responsible in maintain the cleanliness of the center. During visitation, it was found

out that all information was posted in a bulletin of information in strategic places of the institutions. Moreover, the HRMO creates a committee on performance evaluation whose responsibility is to evaluate the papers of the faculty. Each institution's administered the plans carefully and the office is very strict in terms of liquidation and reimbursement. All indicators in the table revealed effective result of management control. The faculty workloads, According to the respondents were based on the existing policies of the CHED and the vice president for academic affairs (VPAA) ensures that the faculty workloads are based on the educational qualification and specialization of the faculty. In general, the extent of governance of SUCs in terms of management control was found out effective with an average weighted mean of 3.14 indicating that administrators implemented, and administered the plans carefully and effectively in the Region.

## **V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

Compared to other higher education institutions throughout the world, the Philippines has been lucky enough to disclose that there is an effective governance among the State Universities and Colleges in Region XII specifically in terms of policy formulation, setting direction, and management control. Nonetheless, it is recommended that other components of governance particularly on moral governance shall be included for future research apart from expanding the setting of the study.

## **REFERENCES**

1. Anthony, R. and Govindarajan, V., 2007. *Management Control Systems*, Chicago, Mc-Graw-Hill IRWIN.
2. Bhasin, H. (2019). *Management Control: Meaning, Types, & Features of Management Control*. <https://www.marketing91.com/management-control/>
3. Brearley, Ben (2020). *The Power of Setting a Direction for Youth Team*. <https://www.thoughtfulleader.com>
4. Burns, T. and F. Koster (eds.) (2016), *Governing Education in a Complex World*, Educational Research and Innovatio, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264255364-en>. Open DOI
5. Reference for Business Encyclopedia (2022). *Management Control*. <https://www.referenceforbusiness.com/management/Log-Mar/Management-Control.html>
6. Controller and Auditor General (2022). *Strategic Direction*. <https://oag.parliament.nz/2015/arts-governance/part3.htm#why>
7. Haramain, J. (2018). *Desirable Factors Contributing to the Leading Performance of Public Secondary School Teachers in Cordillera Administrative Region-Luzon, Philippines*. Available <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/326651235>
8. Hayes W. (2014). *Defining Policy Formulation*. <http://profwork.org/pp/formulate/define.html>
9. Indeed Editorial Team (2021). *7Types of Strategic Direction*. <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/strategic-direction>
10. Maciariello, J. and Kirby, C., 1994. *Management Control Systems - Using Adaptive Systems to Attain Control*, New Jersey, Prentice Hall.
11. Strehlenert, H., Richter-Sundberg, L., Nyström, M.E. et al. Evidence-informed policy formulation and implementation: a comparative case study of two national policies for improving health and social care in Sweden. *Implementation Sci* **10**, 169 (2015). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13012-015-0359-1>